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CIA returns to cloak and-dagger

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WASHINGTON — A new anti-terrorist policy adopted by the White House includes plans for infiltration of secret operatives into terrorist organizations on a large scale in the Middle East, Central America and the Caribbean, according to sources in the U.S. intelligence community.

The new, aggressive plan to fight terrorism, these sources said, is part of a major administration effort to give the cloak and dagger back to the Central Intelligence Agency by rebuilding the agency's clandestine services.

The United States is going back into the spy business in a way that was largely abandoned during the Carter administration, using what the CIA calls "human collection" techniques — as opposed to technological intelligence-gathering through such means as spy satellites — the sources said.

The CIA's role in the mining of Nicaraguan harbors and attacks on oil facilities, exposed in recent days, illustrate part of the rebuilding program — but only part — according to several sources, some of whom have participated in secret briefings.

New agents have been hired by the score: more than 800 clandestine positions cut by Carter have been restored. New CIA offices have been opened around the world. And new plans have been laid for supersecret projects built on human intelligence techniques, involving spies, saboteurs, guerrilla warfare experts and many other kinds of secret operatives.

Some details of the get-tough policy on fighting terrorism came to light during interviews with present or former officials who have directed or monitored U.S. intelligence activities. They agreed to discuss the topic on the condition that they not be identified.

Aided in part by the close friendship of CIA Director William Casey with President Reagan, the CIA has become the fastest growing part of the federal government, expanding at a rate even faster than the Penta-

gon budget, according to sources.

Casey, 71, who was Reagan's 1980 campaign manager, has said that "the government turned its back on intelligence, and the process of gathering it" in the Carter administration. "I want to restore the earlier, good days," he has said.

Under Casey, the CIA budget now soars over \$1.5 billion, a substantial increase, and the amount apportioned to clandestine services increased from about 2 percent or 3 percent to about 10 percent, according to sources who helped draw up the budget.

The exact amount of the CIA budget has always been a closely held government secret. The CIA money is buried in the Pentagon budget, and only a handful of top administration officials know how much it is.

Today, the major projects are the secret war against Nicaragua, to which about 150 agents have been assigned, and the new anti-terrorist campaign.

The key to anti-terrorism, say several current or former officials, will be infiltration, even though problems raised may skirt the edges of the law and raise new controversies for the frequently embattled CIA. "It is the only way you can penetrate," one longtime intelligence specialist said.

"You've got to get your own people on the inside of terrorist organizations to find out what plans for terrorist action are. That means they may have to participate in some pretty hairy activities to establish their credentials. They'll have to go along on the small stuff so that they can be around when big action is planned. Some of our people may have to be a part of low-level assassinations and will have to keep their mouths shut to protect their cover."

A congressional source suggested another possible indirect U.S. role in assassinations.

Castro may be target

For example, this source said, Cuba's President Fidel Castro — once a specific target of CIA assassination attempts — may again be a potential target, this time of non-Americans

but possibly with the unspoken acquiescence of the CIA.

Asked about this possibility, a CIA spokeswoman, Pat Volz, said the CIA would adhere strictly to a presidential executive order signed by Reagan on Dec. 4, 1981, which says: "No person employed by or acting on behalf of the U.S. government shall engage in or conspire to engage in assassinations."

Casey said in a recent interview: "We don't engage in assassinations."

The administration's anti-terrorist campaign will include pre-emptive strikes and direct reprisals, and has been modeled on Israeli techniques, according to both administration and congressional sources.

"President Reagan has studied the Israeli approaches and likes what he sees," a source said. "He likes it because he thinks it works."

"The next time there is a terrorist attack on the U.S. we'll handle it like the Israelis handle theirs. We'll strike back."

A counterterrorism strike force, of about 100 to 150 people, has been built on the Israeli model and set up in the Defense Department.

Team for terrorism

The CIA also has established small teams to deal with terrorist incidents. Casey all but openly acknowledged the U.S. plan in a recent interview with U.S. News and World Report.

"There's a question of deterring terrorism by sending the message that if the terrorists attack there will be retaliation," he said. "The Israelis, for example, send the message: 'If we're hit from your territory, that's your responsibility and we're going to kick you in the teeth somehow.'"

"I think you will see more of that — retaliation against facilities connected with the country sponsoring the terrorists, or retaliation that just hurts the interests of countries which sponsor terrorism."

The secret war against Nicaragua, as one former high CIA official describes it, started out as a small operation and got out of control. No one

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